

# FROM THE MAELSTR

## THE PERUVIAN ABORIGINES

"YOUR man's late, Francie," remarked Tredways. "He may not turn up," I answered.

"I hope he will. When did he leave Chains prison?"

"Two weeks ago. Since then—"

At that moment the bell trilled in the hall.

"Spells!" chuckled Tredways. "He has come."

And as William Spells had just climbed out of the nether depths of a prison existence you will admit that his visit had the interest of the unconventional.

Twenty seconds later he was blinking in the electric sheen of Tredways' sitting-room.

"Sit down, Spells," invited our host cheerily. "What do you say to a drop of Scotch and a cigar?"

The visitor looked at me as much as to say: "Is this a joke?" I nodded encouragingly and pushed a chair forward. Tredways produced the comforts mentioned, placed them on the table, and sat on a corner of it, swinging a leg. He began tersely:

"You know why you are asked here?"

The other lifted his depressed head and turned it toward me slowly. He said to me drearily: "You told me it might be for my good, sir."

"Precisely," cut in our host with briskness. "This gentleman, who is my friend, the Rev. Horace Francie, chaplain of the prison called Chains, wishes to be of use to you. See here, Spells, I'll tell you just how the land lies. This interview is the outcome of an interesting chat between Mr. Francie and myself. Possibly he has told you that I am keenly conversant with matters criminal; that the psychology of crime is with me a passion; that I experience a satisfaction not displeasing in threading a way through those woven and interwoven labyrinths of the underworld. In brief, I am a criminologist. Hogg Tredways, not unconsulted by the police. Enough of that. The chat to which I alluded hinged on the fact that not every man who hears the prison gate clang behind him is necessarily guilty. A certain proportion—though possibly a minute one—there must be of men convicted who were blameless. These poor wretches plead not guilty in the dock. In jail they try to keep up their heads. They emerge defiant or broken; vengeful or bleached white of virility; demoralized by contact with felons, or determined to reassume their niche in a respectable society."

That but a poor spark of interest glimmered in his visitor's gloomy eyes did not disturb Tredways' equanimity. He got off the table and poked the fire slowly.

"Fascinating!" said he with grim relish. "There's drama in it. I like to think of those few souls coming out of the flame. Above all, I would like to help them. Is it possible to take up their case after the lapse of many years, perhaps, and clear them? A hard, hard matter. In many instances a conundrum never to be solved. Yet it has a pull, an appeal most powerful. I asked our friend, the chaplain here, if he had encountered at Chains prison any cases of the kind I have described. His answer was in the affirmative. I said I would like him to produce one of them to make a start with, at any rate. He produced—you, Mr. Spells."

The guest looked from one to the other of us with a dull, with an exhausted expression. He slipped a little the spirits and shook his head.

"You were convicted of murder," went on Tredways, clearly and firmly. "Of the murder of Howard Pendrill. You insisted upon your innocence in the face of the most damning evidence. Now, between us, Spells, man to man, your so-called guilt purged, tell me frankly: Did you kill Pendrill?"

"No, I didn't," answered the other sullenly.

"Then tell us just what happened. The man from the beneath shook his head again, and his brows came together. "No, I won't. You wouldn't believe me. Who would? No one!" He shot out a fist and gripped a handful of the table cover, upsetting his glass. "And yet I didn't murder Pendrill, and that's as sure as there's a God in heaven, or as sure as there isn't!"

"Well, then, tell us about it," soothed Tredways. "We more than half believe you, or you wouldn't be here. Come, make a start. You owned, I am told, a second-hand book shop in Timber street near the East India Dock road. It was in a cellar below this book shop that one

of your customers—Howard Pendrill—was found with a bullet in his brain. You were arrested, and some of his property was found upon you."

"That's simple enough, and the bare truth," answered our guest, his head again drooping dejectedly. "The gentleman came into the shop in the late afternoon and walked round among the cases and shelves, looking at the books. Every one was asked to do that, so I didn't speak to him."

"I understand you had never seen him before?"

"Not that I could remember. After a while he asked me if that was all the books I had. I said there were plenty more upstairs, and showed him two rooms full, on the first floor, one at the front, the other at the back. He went into the back one first. I was wondering if I'd leave him alone there or not when he cried out: 'That's a most interesting work!' He was pointing to a row of ten volumes called 'The History of the Peruvian Aborigines.' It was an old work, in a tattered leather binding. He was as excited as if he had found a treasure—or, rather, more agitated than excited, for his hand shook as he pointed, and I thought he had turned extremely pale."

"History of the Peruvian Aborigines," in ten big volumes?" ejaculated Tredways. "And excited about that? Surely no one had ever wished to purchase it?"

"Well, it so happened that I had got a postcard only the day before, asking me to reserve the volumes for a few days until the sender called and purchased them."

"Indeed?" queried Tredways. "A mere coincidence."

"No doubt, sir. The card wasn't signed, nor did it bear any address. One of the public had seen the book and had scrawled off the request some time after, meaning to purchase it. I mentioned this to Mr. Pendrill. He said in a husky kind of tone: 'That's all right. But perhaps you won't mind my staying here for half an hour while I make some extracts from the books?' Of course I had no objection, and I left him there. That was the last I saw of him alive."

The bookseller stopped. Beads of sweat gathered upon his pale forehead. He seemed unable to continue.

"Take courage," urged Tredways. "Do not wince at the question I must ask. I have made a careful study of this singular case in a file copy of the Times. When you returned to the room where you had left your customer he was gone—leaving on the table his umbrella and overcoat. That was what you asked the jury to believe. Keep calm; I do not say that I disbelieve it. He could easily have quitted the premises without you seeing him. The mystery was his leaving his topcoat with a matter of fifty pounds in notes and gold in the pockets."

"That's it," said the other in a hollow tone.

"If you had taken the garment and money to the police all might have been well with you. Unfortunately, you were in considerable financial straits at the time and you very foolishly yielded to temptation by helping yourself to some of the money when three days had passed without the owner reappearing. At the end of that time your wife made an appalling discovery. On a voyage to a cellar which was little used the body of the missing man was found. In the center of his forehead was a large bruise where he had been struck a blow. A pistol was lying on the green, damp stones of the vault, and a bullet from it had been discharged into the brain. The case against you, Spells, was that you had first stunned Mr. Pendrill, then carried him into the vault and killed him outright. It was supported by the fact of your admitted purloining of part of the money. On the other hand, the pistol could not be traced to your former possession, and the position of the fatal wound—just under the right temple—was not incompatible with a theory of suicide. This saved your life. Are my facts in order?"

Spells made a motion of assent. Tredways went on, choosing each word with care:

"The sensation created brought upon the scene a young lady, Miss Lucy Pendrill, the adopted daughter of the dead man, and who identified the body. I will not enter into the details of your trial, which was illuminated by nothing startling. No shred of evidence was forthcoming against any other person save yourself."

"And you are not going to find it

now, after all these years," was the bitter comment.

"A sane observation," remarked Tredways, blandly. "I want to know if your business has been shut down since your imprisonment?"

"No, sir. My wife has been keeping it together."

"Excellent. Is she a methodical person?"

The bookseller looked bewildered.

"I trust she is, for in that case she may have retained the correspondence of the business, making it possible that you may find the card you mentioned, that postcard from an unknown customer asking you to reserve the 'History of the Peruvian Aborigines,' in ten volumes. I want that card, Spells. Do you think you can lay hands upon it?"

"I might," replied the bookseller, in a gloomy tone, utterly devoid of interest. "My wife's last words were that she would keep everything intact. She never doubted my innocence, gentlemen," he added in a burst of feeling.

"Of course not," echoed Tredways, warmly, as he showed our visitor to the door. "Tell her that you have been to me, and tell her what I want."

He closed the door, returned to his seat by the fire and lapsed into a long silence which he was the first to break.

"If Spells did not kill Pendrill, some one else did. Now that some one had to enter the shop, make his way to the upper back room, attack the victim, convey the body to the disused cellar. That would want doing. I should say it was impossible—ridiculous on the face of it."

"The theory of suicide was never entirely shattered," I ventured.

"That does not explain the blow on the forehead, which stunned Pendrill into unconsciousness before he was murdered."

"Then you think that Spells did kill him?"

"How can I think that? Would he have come here to have his conscience cleared if he was indeed guilty? He has been through prison. He has nothing to gain by weaving a tissue of lies. Besides, I respect the opinion you formed of him in Chains. I am inclined with you to believe that we have here a case of justice deceived. Now what can we do? The harvest of evidence has been reaped and garnered. What is left for me to glean? It is a situation which we must face in every instance of a similar kind. You know what that means, Francie?"

"It means, as I told you, that you will grapple with the impossible," I answered. "You will come far, far too late on the scene."

"Which I shall have to myself," he added with a laugh. "That is something at any rate. However, the likelihood of failure in investigating such cases is intense. I shall succeed here and there. And I will tell you how I shall succeed—it will be by my spotting some apparently utterly insignificant detail which is in reality a most vital value."

"Is that likely to happen?" I doubted.

"It may happen sometimes, Francie," said Tredways earnestly. "It is the one thing to search for—this mere trifle in the case, which was not reckoned with at the trial which sent an innocent man to his fate. And as it was not reckoned with it will have to be very trifling indeed. What is the time?"

"Nearly 10 o'clock."

"Rather too late to call upon Miss Lucy Pendrill. We will pay her a visit early tomorrow morning."

"Ah, you are quite in the dark?"

"I am quite intensely interested. Find me this lady's address, Francie. You should be able to trace her. We will visit her at this hour tomorrow morning. Good night."

As the sensation of the case had made Miss Pendrill's movements more or less conspicuous my task was not difficult. She had been staying at Rickmansworth, but had just left that house furnished and had returned to the house in Woburn place, which was Pendrill's residence when he was alive.

Hogg Tredways' card obtained us a ready interview. A shade of surprise, of pain, appeared on Lucy Pendrill's young, pleasant face as she listened to my companion's opening remarks.

"Can you really think it worth while looking into the matter after all this time?" she asked, sadly. "What do you want me to do?"

"It was stated that your father came from America about a year be-

fore his cruel end?" questioned my companion.

"Yes. Of course, he was not really my father. He adopted me not long before he left America. I was but a child, the daughter of a friend whom he had made there, and who died."

"I see. Possibly he had made an enemy also?"

She shook her head. "I do not know. I have no particular reason to think that. He was, however, always extraordinarily reticent, so if you are going to question me about his life before he took charge of me I shall not be in a position to tell you anything at all. He never said a word about the past."

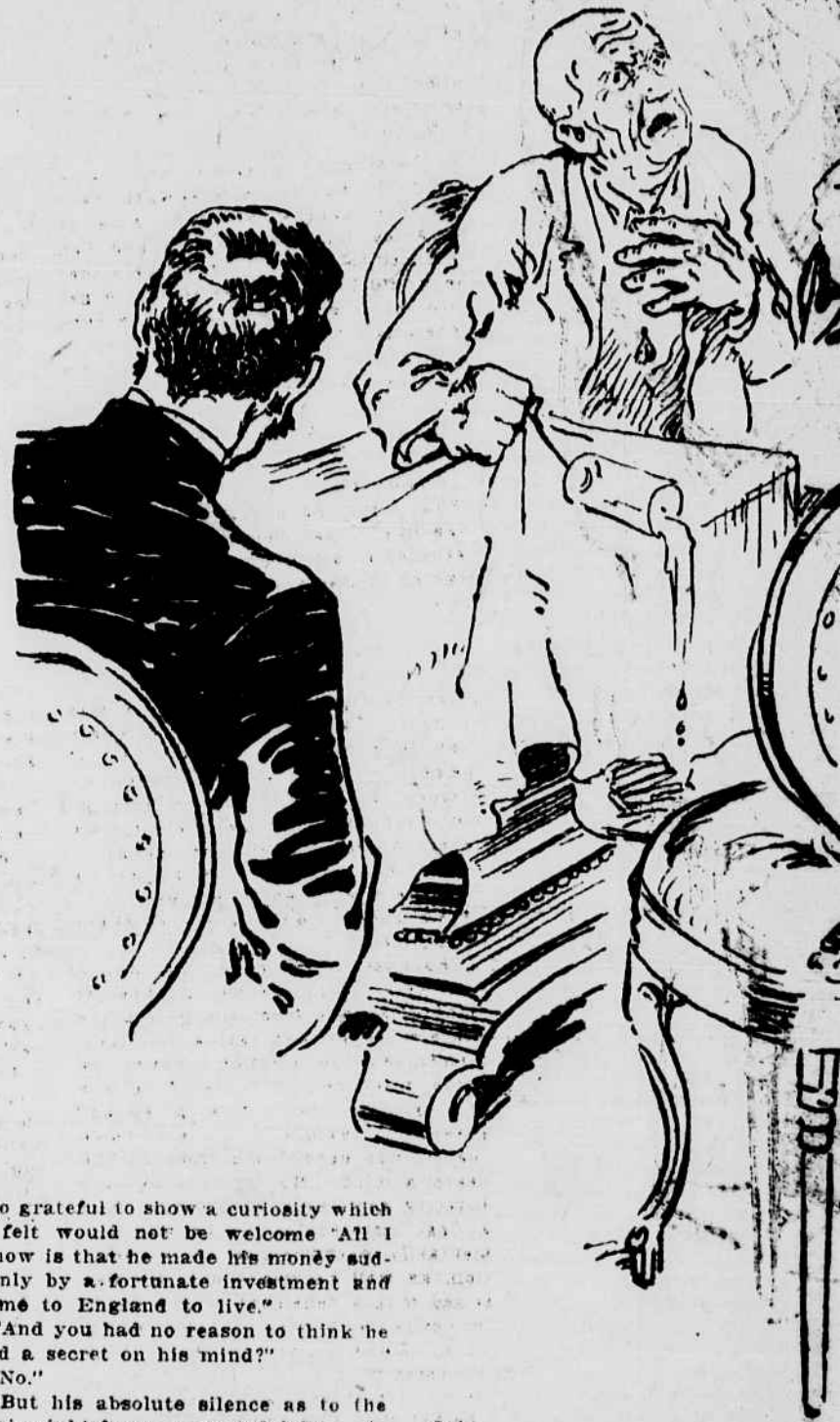
"Indeed? That seems very singular."

"I sometimes thought so, but I was

that instant my father came back. He said: 'Oblige me by putting on your things at once and paying two visits for me. First go to No. — Gower street and inquire if a James Petterson ever lived there; then drive to No. — Mortimer street and ask if a man named Goldsack ever rented a room on the top floor. Be quick.' Then he sat down and finished his coffee watching me, as I thought, with a peculiar expression."

"And you obeyed?" cut in Tredways, impatiently.

"Yes. I found no trace of Petterson, but the unusual name of Goldsack had lingered in the memory of the landlady of the Mortimer street house. She had had so many lodgers come and go, she said, but she rather thought that one of them bearing that name was



too grateful to show a curiosity which I felt would not be welcome. All I know is that he made his money suddenly by a fortunate investment and came to England to live."

"And you had no reason to think he had a secret on his mind?"

"No."

"But his absolute silence as to the past might have suggested it?"

Miss Pendrill did not answer.

"He enjoyed good health?" continued Tredways.

"Not very. He had had a terrible fever a long time ago."

"Oh, he told you that! Was he American born?"

"No, I never thought he was, for he hadn't the accent at all. The question, 'Are you an Englishman?' was once put to him, and I remember that he made a strange reply. He said: 'I suppose so.'"

"H'm," muttered Tredways. "Supposed so, did he? Now, Miss Pendrill, we come to the all-important question of your father's correspondence."

"It was examined by the police in the most searching manner."

"Of course. But we must remember that the police probably regarded it as a matter of form to be gone through. They were so sure that they had the right man."

"You are possibly correct," answered Miss Pendrill in what I thought was rather a tired voice. "But where do you wish to begin? The letters—"

"Permit me to summarize my request. Did Mr. Pendrill receive, not too long before his death, any communication which troubled him?"

"I cannot give a certain answer to that question," replied the lady after a pause. "A week before the frightful tragedy, my father and I being at breakfast, a long silence made me notice that he was resting his forehead in the palm of his hand, his elbow on the table, and that he appeared to be reading one of the letters he had opened. When I looked at him more intently, however, I saw that his eyes were closed, that he seemed to be ill. At my voice he jumped up suddenly and ran out. Alarmed, I glanced at the letter—which I still have—and which is a most harmless epistle. At

then living over a fishmonger's in Goodge street."

"And what did Mr. Pendrill say to that?"

"He laughed and remarked that the information was vague. His fit of illness had passed away, much to my relief. He was even amusing himself by copying some of the morning's letters. He showed me the copies, asking, jestingly, if he had made excellent imitations of the different hand-writings."

"And he had?" snapped in Tredways.

"Indeed, no; they were quite bad."

"Ah! Now I wonder if you have long since destroyed that innocent letter which Mr. Pendrill chanced to be reading at the time of his attack?"

It was soon forthcoming. The sheet of paper bore no address, no signature, but simply the words:

"Pardon delay. Your note of the 10th mislaid. Why not try the office at Southampton?"

We left the house together. I confess that I was unwarmed by even a flicker of enthusiasm, and was for bidding him good-bye.

"But suppose it is over soon?"

I stared incredulously. "Good heavens! How soon?"

"I'll answer that question as soon as we are in my rooms."

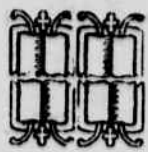
A taxi sped us to Half Moon street, where my companion resided. On his table was a letter, which he ripped open eagerly. It contained an inclosure—the postcard by Spells. On this card were scrawled the words:

"Reserve the volumes of the 'Peruvian Aborigines.'"

"Ha!" chuckled my friend. "I can now answer your question of 'how soon?' He produced Miss Pendrill's



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# The First of a Series of Complete Stories by L. J. Beeston.



producing his cigar case. "In taking up the case of clearing a poor devil who has already served his term of imprisonment you asserted, and justly asserted, that I started at an immense disadvantage owing chiefly to much water having passed under London bridge. But I have compensations, one of which is my extensive erudition in crimes and the perpetrators of crimes. Now this Goldsack—the name is one of his many aliases—is as perfectly well known to me as to New Scotland Yard."

"He once suffered the unpleasantness of receiving five years for forging banknotes," continued Tredways. "He had two accomplices. One of them was a man named Peterson. Peterson died not so long ago. The other, the third man, and the sharpest of the lot, escaped by the skin of his teeth and got out of the country. I never knew what became of him. The criminal investigation department never knew. This morning I found out."

I burst out: "I cannot see eye to eye with you in this, Tredways. Pendrill had made a fortune in America by a legitimate investment and had returned to England. Is it likely that he would be so mad as to try to get into touch with two dangerous confederates of the past?"

"Profoundly unlikely if he knew that he had been associated with them."

I stared. "What on earth do you mean?"

Tredways chuckled hilariously. "You might have asked, also, if it was likely that Pendrill would have returned at all, knowing he had been wanted in England by the police. But he didn't know it any more than he knew for certain about his pals. Shall I tell you the startling truth? Well, it is my conviction that some time after his flight to the states he was so unfortunate—or perhaps fortunate—as to suffer a complete lapse of memory. It was either through an accident, a severe physical mishap, or more probably through that terrible fever which his adopted daughter spoke about. Recall the fact of his absolute silence as to his past."

"Ah—but he would have been silent in any case."

"Excellent. No doubt he would. And yet I think he would have let some detail slip from him during the years when he was caring for Lucy. Remember the strange answer he made, when he was asked if he was an Englishman; an answer given, apparently, in so queer a tone of voice that it was deeply impressed on the hearer's mind. But that is not all. Directly something of his past was at last restored to him he was momentarily overwhelmed with emotion, as well he might be! He was seized with a vehemence, with a deadly desire to prove the forbidding truth! He sent his daughter to those addresses with inquiry as to whether his confederates had lived there; whether they had existed at all. He dared not go himself. When she was gone he tried to persuade himself his memory was still playing him false. So he set about endeavoring to imitate the handwriting on the letters he had received that morning. If he had been a forger he must have had great skill in imitation of that kind."

"But he made bad copies," I protested.

"Of course he did. Years had passed. He had got out of practice. And then the agitation under which he labored was fatal to the test."

"But why should his memory have suddenly returned?"

"Because some one had found him who wanted to make it return. Peterson being dead, that some one must have been Goldsack. Goldsack had spotted him by chance or otherwise. Goldsack had found that Pendrill was not as he used to be. He determined—no doubt for purposes of blackmail—to bring back the past to his fortunate and wealthy confederate. So he sent him that line which ran: 'Pardon delay. Your note of the 10th mislaid. Why not try the office at Southampton?' This was a code. I saw through it at once. I am used to reading such riddles. The word 'delay' means danger, police interference. For 'note' read 'bank-note'. For '10th' read 'ten pounds'. For 'try office at Southampton' read 'try the boat sailing from Southampton'. It all meant, when the message was first sent to Pendrill by his pals years ago, that the game was up, that a luckless ten-pound forged note had done them in. Pendrill doubtless got that message in time and vanished from England. Years after he returned, as we have seen. A shock was needed to bring back something, at any rate, of his memory. Goldsack had the shock in his locker all right. He dispatched once more the

very warning which had made his confederate bolt like greased lightning back in those shady years. It was sufficient to rouse Pendrill's strangely dormant faculty. Goldsack, keenly on the watch, noting every movement of his victim whom he meant to bleed, saw that his trick had worked. That brings us to—

"To where?" I insisted, bubbling now with excitement and enthusiasm. "To 'The History of the Aborigines.' Here we are, by George. Out with you, Francie!"

"Will you come upstairs, gentlemen?" cried the bookseller, who had made his appearance at the back of the shop.

"To the back room you spoke about?" said Tredways, as we climbed the narrow, creaking flight. "This is it? And the ten volumes of the Peruvian work?"

"Are there, sir," answered the owner, and he pointed to the old leather-bound books with their ribbed backs, which contained just a trace of gold lettering. They were on a level with our heads.

"A chair, please," asked Tredways.

I placed one for him, which he mounted, and he began to remove the volumes, I taking each one from his hands. I do not think I was ever so keenly curious in my life. The removal of the big tomes had made a considerable gap upon the shelf, revealing the wall behind it. Upon this wall Tredways groped with the outstretched palms of his hands. Presently he grunted—

"It is here, sure enough, but the thing has rusted. I want a stout chisel, also a couple of candles."

The articles were forthcoming in less than a minute. I saw my friend urge the chisel into an aperture; there was a sudden vibrating sound, a hard thud. A huge chunk of the wall had rolled back in a groove, released by the spring. We gazed into the hole, black as the pit, from which a cold and damp air streamed upon our faces.

"I'm going through," said Tredways. "Follow me, Francie. Spells, wait here."

"Be careful, Francie. There's a ring-bolt just inside, overhead. Get a grip on it and lower yourself on to the iron ladder which runs down inside the hole."

It wasn't easy, but I soon found myself standing by his side on a rickety wooden staging from which half a dozen steps went down.

"See the green mold on those steps?" exclaimed Tredways. "Go easy, old man, or you will slip and perhaps make a big bruise in the middle of your forehead, just as Pendrill did."

Holding the candle above his head, he descended before me. The smoky

light showed us a passage with walls of concrete slabs adrip with foul moisture. The end of this passage seemed quite barred by a wall, also of concrete. Tredways fumbled and tolled with his chisel for fully twenty minutes before he got the hang of the spring, which, released, showed that the apparent wall was in reality a door that opened inward. We passed through into a large cellar.

"The place where the body of Pendrill was discovered," announced my companion, wiping the sweat from his forehead. "We have reached it via an unorthodox way—that is to say, the way left for ingress or egress by the trio of banknote forgers who here made their plates, their mills, their dies. Needless to say, all that paraphernalia was cleared away before the police made their pounce. My case for establishing the innocence of our friend Spells is, I am assured, how complete."

He stuck the candle on a box and lighted a cigarette.

I stammered, too astonished for clear speech. "But how on earth did you know of the existence of that hole in the wall, that staircase and tunnel?"

"How? I suspected something of the kind. I was bound to. Pendrill gave it away. After he had tried to test the wretched memory of guilt which had come to him, by sending to the houses in Gower street and Mortimer street, he could not rest until he had convinced his agonized conscience by a visit to the haunt where he had worked with his confreres. He realized that, if he found that, then his unhappy past of crime would be proved to himself. But he discovered that the house in Timber street was changed; that it was the establishment of a second-hand bookseller. He made his way upstairs to the secret, the stealthy place of entrance which we have just used. It was concealed, as it happened, by a row of big volumes. 'The History of the Peruvian Aborigines.' Pendrill sent away the bookseller under pretext of wanting to study the work. Once alone, he found the place of ingress. But he had grown corpulent; he could not get through burdened with his heavy topcoat. So he left it behind him. When he was there, fearing that the bookseller might return, he replaced the volumes, which he had left within reach, in their places. On his way down those slippery steps he fell, as I mentioned, hurt his forehead badly, and may have been unconscious for a few minutes. Finally, he entered this cellar.

"And then? He was alone with the former scenes of his bad life. The

dread and horror of it rushed upon him. He was aware from the duplicate note he had received—the note which first stirred the chords of memory—that an enemy had found him. The past was frightful; there was terror in the future. He had not ventured to this sinister place without arms; and I have no doubt at all that he suddenly drew the pistol from his pocket and—went out eternally into the dark."

"Ah, good heavens!" I gasped.

"Any more questions?"

"Yes, one more. The bookseller had received an anonymous card asking him to reserve the ten volumes of the history. We know that it was in the same writing as the code sent by Goldsack; that is to say, Goldsack sent the card, also. How did he come to do that?"

"Simple. After sending that copy of the code to Pendrill he watched, I repeat, every movement of his victim. He knew he had tried to find some evidence of Peterson or himself—Goldsack. It was clear to the latter, therefore, that Pendrill would, probably endeavor to find this place here, to ascertain whether it really did exist in fact, and not in a mental nightmare. And he was right, only at that point Goldsack made a bad move. He was presumably so suddenly and nervously afraid that some chance customer would purchase the Peruvian book and that the secret entrance here would be prematurely discovered, that he hit upon the idea of reserving the history. There he stupidly overreached himself; but it is just the kind of slip which is so often made by men of his sort. The secret had been kept by time all those years; it was safe enough. But he worried about it; he wanted Pendrill to come and find it just as it was and uninterfered with. He is now, you will perceive, my dear Francie, in our power. Confronted with these facts by the police, he will assuredly admit their validity in order to save himself from extreme unpleasantness. When I state, therefore, that William Spells will be cleared of the charge of murdering Howard Pendrill I am convinced that I make no rash utterance."

"Yes, yes," I admitted. "But—"

"Heavens! What now?"

"Why, Goldsack has gone. You do not know where—"

"My dear man! Do you imagine that new Scotland Yard ever loses trace of a criminal of that caliber? Come along. This air is positively poisonous."

Copyright, 1920.

Another story of this series will appear in The Star Magazine of an early issue.

## WHAT AVIATION UNPREPAREDNESS COST THE UNITED STATES.

Written for The Star Magazine by an Army Aviator.

THE first attempt to fly a man-operated airplane was on October 7, 1903. This plane was called "Langley's duck." Unfortunately this attempt failed and the engineer operating the plane nearly drowned. On December 17, 1903, Wilbur Wright made four successful flights, the longest of which was 850 feet. On September 20, 1904, the Wrights made their first circular flight. Also, they made over one hundred flights during the year. In 1905 they established a record of twenty-four miles in thirty-eight minutes. In 1907 they offered to sell our government all rights and interest in their patents, but were refused.

On December 23, 1907, the War Department issued specifications for a plane. These were the first specifications issued by any government, and were issued under the direction of Maj. George O. Squier, calling for a speed of forty miles per hour, one-hour flight, with two passengers and a weight-carrying capacity of 850 pounds, fuel for 125 miles and ability to steer in all directions without difficulty. Twenty-four bids were received and two contracts awarded. Congress refused the appropriation asked by the Secretary of War for aviation, which necessitated recourse to funds of the board of ordnance and fortifications.

On September 9, 1908, at 7:50 a.m., at Fort Myer, Va., Wright circled the grounds fifty-seven times at 100 feet altitude in less than an hour. In the afternoon he made fifty-five rounds in 1 hour, 2 minutes and 15 seconds. Later in the afternoon, with Lieut. Lahm as passenger, he made a flight of 6 minutes and 24 seconds. On September 12 Maj. Squier was taken as passenger. On September 17 the pro-

peller broke at a height of seventy-five feet and the plane crashed, killing Lieut. Selfridge, the passenger, and injuring Wright.

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During this time Wilbur Wright was electrifying Europe with flights. In July, 1909, the Wrights demonstrated a new type of plane at Fort Myer, which was accepted by the government and earned, in addition, \$5,000 bonus for a ten-mile cross-country flight. As Congress still refused to appropriate money for aviation, it was necessary to use other funds to purchase this plane.

Meanwhile European nations were appropriating money and encouraging aviation. In 1910 the speed of an airplane was increased to more than a mile a minute; a non-stop record of 244 miles in five hours and thirty-two minutes, and an altitude of 8,692 feet was reached. Motors were increased from twenty-five and thirty horsepower to fifty and 100 horsepower, the Alps were successfully crossed and flights from London to Paris with four passengers, in addition to the pilot, were made. The United States was left far behind, for only one lieutenant and nine enlisted men were on aviation duty.

On September 9, 1910, during the French army maneuvers, a French officer made four reconnaissances in quick succession, discovering a counter-attack on the right flank, and by reporting this to the commanding general enabled preparation to defeat it.

On March 3, 1911, Congress voted \$125,000 in the Army appropriation act for the fiscal year, 1912, for aviation. It is significant to note that France asked for \$1,000,000 in the same year. On November 1, 1912, the United States had twelve officers,

thirty-nine men and twelve planes. Less than two months previous to this, on September 7, 1912, at Villa Coublay, France, during the review of the French army, there were seventy-two planes present, of which twenty returned to patrol the German border after the maneuvers. This, of course, was not the full aviation strength of France at that time.

On March 26, 1912, the Secretary of War asked Congress for an appropriation of \$2,000,000 for an air force of 120 planes, and to establish training schools. On August 24, 1912, Congress appropriated \$100,000, which was \$25,000 less than the previous appropriation. In the summer of 1913 our air force was as follows: Eleven flying officers, one of the twelve previously available having been killed in a crash; four had transferred to other branches of the service; twelve officers under instruction; fifteen planes and forty-seven enlisted men. Up to December 1, 1913, we had purchased only twenty-four machines, although ten years previous to that time the Wrights had made their first flight and five years previous they had made their first official government flight.

In 1913 it was estimated there were 2,400 aviators in the world, France having 1,200; Germany, 320; England, 303; Italy, 200; Austria, 60; Belgium, 50, and the United States, 50. In the five years following 1908, there had been only 75 applicants for flying, of whom 13 were disqualified temperamentally, 3 physically and 6 otherwise. Thirty-two took up flying; 13 were relieved. Capt. Mitchell stated that the reason for this was the fact that there was no future in aviation at that time.

In the Army appropriation bill of 1915, \$1,000,000 was estimated for aviation. Secretary of War Garrison (Continued on Page 6, Column 2.)

### MURDER PENDRILL!

communication, placing it by the side of the postcard.

"Any resemblance between those two fists, Frankie?" he cried.

"They are very much alike," I admitted. "But what—"

Away he went at a fast pace, up Piccadilly, through Shaftesbury avenue, and we reached our destination in twenty minutes. As we learned that the shop was the only one of its odorous kind in the thoroughfare we were under no doubts. Tredways rang, and a woman appeared. His question as to whether a Mr. Goldsack was a lodger here met with a disappointing response. The woman had not even heard of him.

More, as she was busy, she shut the door in our faces.

"Oh, come," grumbled Tredways, "we are not going to be bunkered in this fashion. Let us try the shop."

The owner looked up from his work. "Goldsack, gentlemen? Yes, I just remember him. Had two rooms over here about a year ago."

"If you remember him you can describe him?" suggested my companion.

"Well, I only used to catch a passing glimpse of him. He looked a man of about fifty, nearly bald, short and stout and wore gold fold-ers."

Tredways almost pulled me out and we found a cab.

"Timber street, East India dock road," he ordered. "Drive slowly."

"Why slowly?" I questioned as we seated ourselves.

"Because I have one or two things to say, my dear Francie," said my friend with a delighted composure.